

April 11, 2014

The Honorable Gina McCarthy  
Administrator  
US Environmental Protection Agency  
Ariel Rios Building  
1200 Pennsylvania Ave. NW  
Washington, DC 20460



Dear Administrator McCarthy,

On behalf of the Outdoors Alliance for Kids (OAK) and our 72 member organizations representing more than 30 million individuals, we respectfully request your presence at the Great Outdoors America Week *Youth Event* taking place at the Bladensburg Waterfront Park along the Anacostia River, on Wednesday, June 25, 2014 from 9:00 am – 12:00 pm. The OAK *Youth Event* will feature Wilderness Inquiry's Canoemobile as well as a variety of activity stations led by OAK members to inspire youth to get physically active in the outdoors. During the event we plan to include a short media program where we hope you will address the youth.

We know how important connecting youth with the outdoors is to you personally and to the mission of the Environmental Protection Agency. OAK's *Youth Event* also supports the First Lady's *Let's Move Outside!* initiative to solve the childhood obesity epidemic by getting kids active on our public lands and Interior Secretary Sally Jewell's youth initiative to ensure young people across America can play, learn, serve and work outdoors. OAK's *Youth Event* will be the signature event for children and youth during Great Outdoors America Week 2014, when hundreds of advocates from across the country will come to Washington, DC, to show support for protecting America's natural and cultural heritage and to connect youth to the great outdoors.

As you know, America's outdoors provides many opportunities for children and families to get healthy and inspired. Whether it's an iconic National Park or a river running through an urban community, our public lands provide opportunities for kids to get physically active outdoors.

During the *Youth Event*, OAK members will draw attention to the growing divide between children and nature while imparting a variety of nature-based outdoor recreation skills on the youth participants. June is also the fourth anniversary of *Let's Move Outside!* and the launching of OAK, and an ideal time to inspire kids to spend their summers outdoors.

On behalf of our member organizations and youth expected to attend this event, we would be thrilled if you would do us the greatest honor and join us on June 25<sup>th</sup> to help inspire the next generation to get outdoors.

Thank you for your consideration. We will follow up with your staff in the coming days, or s/he may contact OAK's Chair, Jackie Ostfeld ([Jackie.Ostfeld@sierraclub.org](mailto:Jackie.Ostfeld@sierraclub.org), 202-548-6584). We cannot thank you enough for your efforts to protect our environment and connect young people the outdoors.

Sincerely,

**Barbara Tulipane**, President & Chief Executive Officer, National Recreation and Park Association

**Christine Fanning**, Executive Director, The Outdoor Foundation

**Greg Lais**, Executive Director, Wilderness Inquiry

**Jackie Ostfeld**, Chair, Outdoors Alliance for Kids

**Jaime Williams**, President, The Wilderness Society

**Larry Schweiger**, President & Chief Executive Officer, National Wildlife Federation

**Marc Berjeka**, President, REI Foundation

**Mary Ellen Sprenkel**, President & Chief Executive Officer, The Corps Network

**Michael Brune**, Executive Director, Sierra Club

**Nancy Brown**, Chief Executive Officer, American Heart Association

**Neil Nicoll**, President & Chief Executive Officer, YMCA of the USA

**Sarah Milligan-Toffler**, Executive Director, Children & Nature Network

**Scott Kovarovics**, Executive Director, Izaak Walton League of America